

Correspondence.

FULHAM WORKHOUSE COMPETITION.

SIR,—I have some faint recollection (merely the ghost of one) of having, in the month of February last (above sixteen weeks ago), sent in some competition drawings for a workhouse, which was intended at that time to be erected at Fulham, and also believe that above thirty architects did likewise.

Not having since had either the drawings returned, or any notice as to the award of premiums, and as the thing occurred so very long ago, I may perhaps only have been dreaming, but yet it appears to me quite plain that I saw an advertisement from the Guardians, in which they stated that they would give premiums for the three most approved designs, and that "they would adjudicate on the plans, &c., on the 16th day of March." The 16th of March? let me see: does that come before or after the 21st of June—methinks it comes before—what do you say, Mr. Editor?

I feel rather sleepy still: perhaps you can inform me if it be true that the competitors are all, with the exception of one only, going to have a meeting (the place of which now only remains to be settled), to decide upon the best plan of entering into a vigorous competition (in the shape of a prosecution) against the Guardians, for obtaining so many valuable drawings under false pretences. A clear case will be made out, without a doubt, against them, when the whole affair is properly sifted by gentlemen of another profession.

I am, Sir, &c.,

A PATIENT COMPETITOR FOR THE
FULHAM WORKHOUSE.

Miscellaneous.

PROJECTED WORKS.—Advertisements have been issued for tenders, by 8th July, for the erection of a savings bank at Saffron Walden; by 1st July, for the erection of certain buildings, &c., for the Hollingbourn Union; by 7th, for the repair of twelve houses at Bethnal-green; by 1st, for the erection of schools and master's house at ~~Prosswood~~; by same date, for the erection of school-house and master's dwelling at Isleham; by 11th, for the erection of a circular engine-shed, 150 feet diameter, at the Leicester station of the Midland Railway; by 1st, for bricklayers', joiners', stonemasons', slaters', plumbers', and painters' work on the estates of the Hull Trinity-house; by 29th June, for a supply of 30,000 Canadian larch or hachmatac sleepers for the London and North Western Railway; by same date, for supplying and laying down pavement on the marsh roads, Southampton; by 5th July, for repairing and paving footways and carriageways in Westminster; by 3rd, for the supply of 50,000 cubic feet of dressed granite for Plymouth Breakwater; by 28th inst., for a supply of ironmongery for the East-India Company; and by 27th inst., for painting the market-hall and fish-hall, Birmingham.

THE WORKS IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY.—Sir,—I have just returned from a visit to Westminster Abbey. Although I did not approve of the plan of the alterations when it was first mooted, I find the general effect produced by them is better than I thought it would be. I still think, that, cumbered as the north transept is with monuments, grossly unfit, by their size and character, to stand among those beautiful arches, it would be better to shut that transept out of view from the poet's corner altogether; to say nothing of ecclesiastical objections to opening it. However, since it is thrown open, there is a comfort in thinking that, as these evidences of bad taste are brought more fully before the view of the public, it may lead to their removal sooner, by the early provision of some suitable national receptacle for the Mansfield and other monuments. I agree with you in thinking the carving of the stalls and organ screen excellent: it reflects great credit upon the artists. But I am rather disappointed with the colour of the wood: it is too light, and does not, in my opinion, harmonize with the character of the building on that account: surely it would be far better if stained a deep brown oak colour like the carving in York Cathedral.

E. A.

MONUMENTS FOR CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL.—Mr. Edmund Richardson, the sculptor, has completed two monuments to those of the 31st and of the 16th Lancers who fell on the Suttlej, and which are to be placed in Canterbury Cathedral. The first consists of a centre panel, 3 feet by 3 feet 6 inches, containing inscriptions (203 men having fallen, besides officers); the pediment or upper member, the tattered flags of the regiment as they came out of Sobraon, an enemy's gun on carriage, &c.; the side or wing pieces, the Sikh flags and other trophies taken; and the plinth or lower member, the Suttlej medal, and a branch of laurel and cypress. These, with an upper and lower moulding, are in white marble, placed on a dark marble ground, and relieved, at the corners, by the words *Moodkee, Ferozeshah, Aliwal, Sobraon*, in bronze scrolls. The monument is 6 feet in height and width, and the relief various.—That for the 16th Lancers, which exceeds in size the former, being 8 feet high by 5 feet 6 inches wide, contains, in a centre panel, 4 feet by 3 feet 6 inches, an alto-relief of a wounded officer resting against a palm-tree, tended by one of his troop, who has dismounted, and with the lance in one hand, is offering with the other water from his flask, the horse standing by his side. A Sikh helmet, with gorget of chain-mail near, shews the conflict his officer had encountered. On the moulding below is *Aliwal* in raised letters; and on plinth, which rests on two laurelled trusses, the inscription.—To those of the 16th Lancers, who fell in the discharge of their duty, in the Suttlej campaign;—the names of the killed being placed in two broken columns, with cypress wreaths suspended, one on either side of the centre panel. Above the panel is a moulding and pediment, which last contains the regimental devices, the Guznee and Suttlej medals, and Maharajpoo star, and motto,—*Aut cursu, aut cominus armis*. The monument is relieved by a dove-marble ground.—Able as these monuments may be executed, we are bound to say the designs ought, in our opinion, to have been very different in character for the proposed situation.

STATE OF RAILWAY QUESTION AND OF TRADE, &c. AT PARIS.—The Government project of taking possession of the railways has been under the consideration of Committees of Finance and of Public Works. The latter proposes that the amount of the indemnity offered by the Government in *Rentes* should be regulated, not by the average price for the six months, but for the twelve and eighteen months preceding 24th February. The former, admitting the right of the Government to seize the railways "as an expropriation for public utility"—decided that the Minister of Finance had not shown sufficient grounds to justify him in taking immediate possession of them, and unanimously disapproved of the terms offered to the companies. For example, the Government would gain (or in fact, without giving any equivalent, confiscate and seize) from the Tours and Nantes Company 11,000,000*fr.* and 15,000,000*fr.* ready cash from the Paris and Strasburg Company's works, which cost the company 18,500,000*fr.* The committee further objects that, in consequence of the state of the finances of the Government, it would be inexpedient to purchase the railroads, and proposes, in conclusion, the rejection of the Government project altogether.—The diminution of confidence and trade in Paris, and France at large, has been already but too plainly proved by statistical details occasionally given in *THE BUILDER*. The same lamentable result of the past and present events is attested in the *Constitutionnel*, by the fact, that a country shopkeeper, who had been tempted to risk some 60*l.* in the selection and intended purchase of a lot of bronzes in Paris, and was in the act of handing over the money, only required to hear the admonitory sound of the eternal *rappel*, followed forthwith by the *generale*, to recal his mind to his prudential senses, his frank pieces to his breeches pocket, and his endangered person to his native province. More than twenty manufacturing jewellers, who have not disposed even of the smallest article of their trade ever since the eventful 24th of February, have resolved to shut shop and also retire to the country for the present.—The National Assembly and the Executive have appointed "a council of *prud'hommes*, to

settle all differences between employers and their operatives."—The Committee appointed by the assembly to report on the demand of 3,000,000 francs (120,000*l.*) for the support of the national workshops, has unanimously resolved to adopt efficacious measures to put an end entirely to the waste of money in these workshops.—The examination into the state of the *Ateliers Nationaux* has already led to the discovery that there were 25,000 false names on the list of the workmen employed, which, at the rate of two francs a day, amounts to 2,000*l.* sterling a-day, "which went into some person's pocket."

PROTECTION FROM FIRE.—On Tuesday, the 20th, a deputation from a public meeting held in the parish of St. Pancras, on the subject of protection from fire, had an audience with Sir George Grey, at the Home Office, which lasted three-quarters of an hour, and may, it is hoped, lead to important results in a matter so closely allied to comfort and safety. Sir George expressed an opinion that there can be no doubt as to the utility of the fire-escapes, which have already saved sixty lives in London, and the accounts he has had of the new invention (the annihilator), make it very desirable that its claims should be fairly investigated, and if there is a necessity for amending the Act of 1774, it ought to be done to enable parish authorities to avail themselves of the improvements of the age. The fire annihilator is a small machine of the size of a common pail, containing several iron encasements, and in the middle 7 lbs. of nitre, carbon, and gypsum, in the proportions of six, two, and two, and also one quart of water; at a touch of the finger on a small piston, charged with a small quantity of chlorate of potash and sugar, the compound is in a moment converted into steam to an amount so enormous, that it equals the quantity produced by a five-horse steam-boiler, and is equivalent to a brigade fire-engine. The whole machine can be made for 1*l.*, of which the combustible spent is worth only 1*d.* Its mode of extinguishing a fire appears to be by the steam, emitted in a dense column on the lower part of the flame, or on the ignited combustibles, cutting off instantly the supply of oxygen, and the momentary vacuum being followed by a rush of cold air. The proportion of heat is thus reduced below the flame temperature, and, if the quantity of heat be not very intense, scarce a spark will escape being smothered. Experiments to the extent of the debris of several tar-barrels, sprinkled with turpentine, have been made with good effect—a flame 30 feet high being put out, as if by magic. A further test will soon determine its powers. Lord Dudley Coutts Stuart, as chairman of the public meeting, headed the deputation, with Sir Benjamin Hall, M.P., the churchwardens of St. Pancras, Mr. Geo. Foggo and other gentlemen.

THE SUBTERRANEAN FIRE below the village of Lower Haugh, near Rotherham, which originated about twenty years since in the coal, at a point where it rose to the surface, is still burning, and the fear of the villagers as to the ultimate fate of their dwellings still prevails, and is occasionally increased, indeed, by the sinking of foundations and the rending of walls. The Wentworth Mausoleum had to be isolated by severing the coal bed by a special shaft. Meantime, however, although the evil is rapidly on the increase, and the heat and sulphur are in some places intolerable, the villagers are prudently making the most of it, by the conversion of "large tracts" of land into "one huge hot-bed, where the heat is not so intense as to destroy vegetation altogether." Fine winter quarters these!—another Madeira for invalids, indeed—were it not for the sulphur and the insecurity. Smoke and flame have even occasionally to be kept under "by puddling the eruptions with clay!"

INSTITUTE OF BRITISH ARCHITECTS.—At a meeting of the Royal Institute of Architects, held on Monday, the 12th inst., Mr. Sydney Smirke, A.R.A., in the chair, the Rev. Richard Burgess, B.D., read a very interesting paper on "the Theatres and Porticoes of Ancient Rome." We shall give it at full length in an early number. The closing meeting of the session will be held on Monday evening next, when Professor Willis will read a paper on "the Triforium of the Medieval Churches."